

Vegetable Growers Just Getting Started

VERNON ACHENBACH, JR., Lancaster Farming Staff
HERSHEY (Dauphin Co.) — The future of vegetable and fruit production in Pennsylvania looks promising, according to officials at the 1990 Pennsylvania Vegetable Conference and Trade Show.



Like a mini-Farm Show, more than a hundred exhibitors display the latest in vegetable and fruit production for the 1,400 registered attendees during the Pennsylvania Vegetable Growers Conference.

vegetable and fruit growers' three-day convention was held in the Hershey Lodge and Convention Center this week. More than 100 commercial exhibitors occupied two-floors of the center and displayed an array of interest and technologies, ranging from pesticides and herbicides to apple-packing machinery and the latest

in seeds and soil-enhancements. Seminars on topics ranging from irrigation to processing and food safety ran almost continuously. Speakers were all considered top experts in their fields. About 1,400 people registered for the event with about 800 registering as vegetable growers. According to Daniel Schantz, who is vice president of the state Vegetable Growers Association and chairman of the one-year-old Vegetable Growers Marketing and Research Board, the convention was "extraordinary. We were guesstimating about 750 because of the excitement there is in vegetable growing," he said.

According to Schantz, vegetable growing in Pennsylvania could "snowball" from the estimated 2,000 to 3,000 producers in the state to a large number of small independent producers. Last year, the number of growers increased about 150 percent, he said. Schantz said he believes a recent



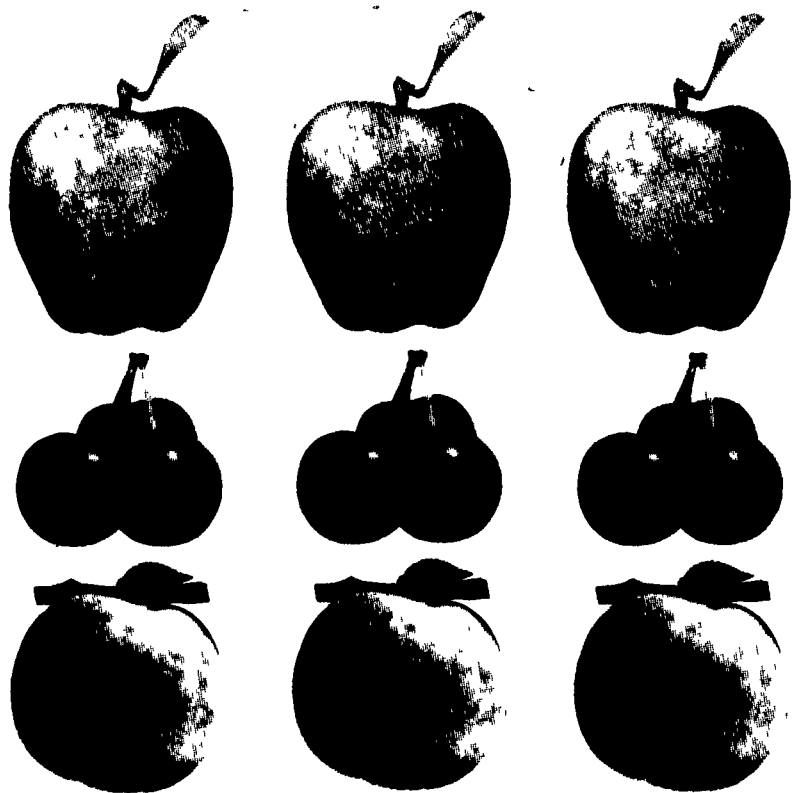
To help promote Pennsylvania produce, the state vegetable board unveils its emblem.

change in marketing produce and the start of the state marketing board will be a catalyst for a stronger market.

Currently, the largest market for state-grown produce is through

roadside stands and markets, Schantz said. He added that the projection is for more farmers to start selling their products through local auctions. The auctions,

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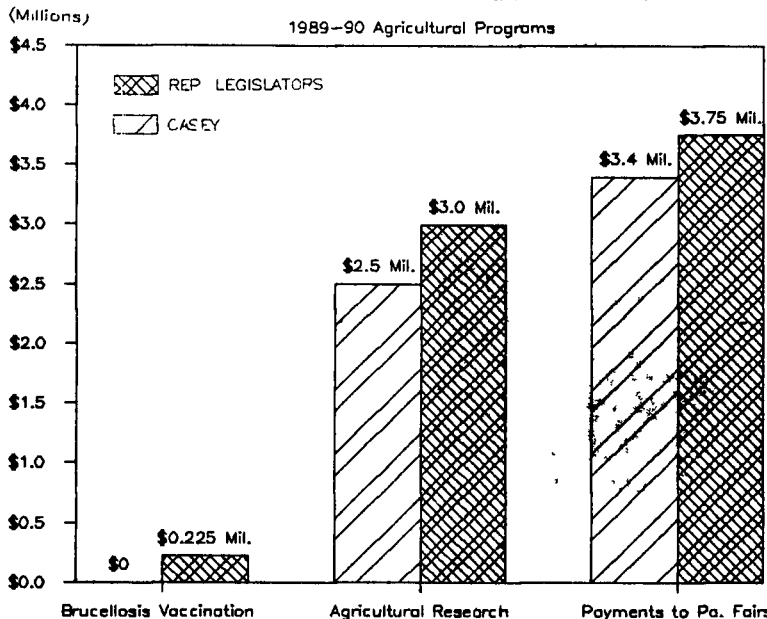
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The governor increased the 1989-1990 general state budget by \$644,171,000. Yet he eliminated funding for the vital brucellosis vaccination and mushroom promotion programs and he didn't add an extra dime for desperately needed agricultural research and other commodity promotions. Also slighted were county fairs, 4-H Club Shows and the Future Farmers of America Foundation. Some friend!

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*Shear, C. B. and M. Faust. 1971. Nutritional Factors Influencing the Mineral Content of Apple Leaves. J. Amer. Soc. Hort. Sci. 96(2): 234-240

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